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The Effect of Using Flashcards on Sixth Grade Students' Achievement in English Vocabulary in Tabouk District in Saudi Arabia

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my parents, my brothers and my wife.

Abdullah Saleem Al-shaman

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Abstract

The effect of using flashcards on sixth grade students' achievement in English vocabulary in Tabouk district in Saudi Arabia

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The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of using flashcards on sixth grade students' achievement in English vocabulary in Ibn Zaidoon School for boys and Al Sabea Wa Athalathon school for girls in Tabouk. To achieve the purpose of the study, a pre/post-test of twenty nine items on English language vocabulary.

The sample of the study consisted of 149 sixth grade students; 73 male students and 76 female students from Ibn Zaidoon School for boys and Al Sabea Wa Athalathon School for girls in Tabouk during the second semester 2010/2011.

The participants of the study were distributed into four groups (two female groups experimental and control, and two male groups (experimental and control). The experimental groups were taught English vocabulary using flashcards while the control groups were taught using the conventional methods.

Descriptive statistical analyses were used (means and standard deviation) for the pre and post- tests of students' English vocabulary. Comparison statistical methods were used (Two Way ANOVA) analysis of variance to make a comparison between the control and the experimental groups and gender variable.

The findings of the study indicated that there were statistically significant differences in the post- test between the control and the experimental groups in favor of the experimental group, and there was no statistically significant difference in the students' achievement due to gender.

The researcher concluded with recommendations to enhance the effect of using flashcards for teaching English vocabulary on students' achievement in English vocabulary such as conducting further studies on other populations and for a longer period of time.

الملخص

أثر استخدام البطاقات التعليمية على تحصيل طلبة الصف السادس في مفردات اللغة الانجليزية في منطقة تبوك في المملكة العربية السعودية

عبدالله سليم الشامان

جامعة مؤتة، 2011

تهدف هذه الدراسة لاستعلام أثر استخدام البطاقات التعليمية على تحصيل طلبة الصف السادس في مفردات اللغة الإنجليزية في مدرسة ابن زيدون للذكور والمدرسة السابعة والثلاثون للإناث في منطقة تبوك. لتحقيق هدف الدراسة، تم إجراء اختبار قبلي واختبار بعدي لقياس مستوى الطلبة في مفردات اللغة الإنجليزية. تكون الاختبار من تسع وعشرين فقرة حول مفردات اللغة الإنجليزية، تكونت عينة الدراسة من 149 طالباً وطالبة من الصف السادس 73 ذكور و76 إناث من مدرستي ابن زيدون للذكور والمدرسة السابعة والثلاثون للإناث في منطقة تبوك خلال الفصل الدراسي الثاني 2010-2011. تم توزيع المشاركين في الدراسة على مجموعتين ضابطة وتجريبية، وتم تدريس المجموعة التجريبية باستخدام البطاقات التعليمية في حين تم تدريس المجموعة الضابطة باستخدام الأساليب التقليدية. اشتملت المجموعة التجريبية على 75 طالباً وطالبة؛ 38 ذكور و37 إناث في حين اشتملت المجموعة الضابطة على 74 طالباً وطالبة؛ 35 ذكور و39 إناث. تم توزيع الطلبة على أربع شعب، 2 ضابطة و2 تجريبية، تم اختيارها بالطريقة العشوائية في ابن زيدون للذكور والمدرسة السابعة والثلاثون للإناث في تبوك. تم استخدام التحاليل الإحصائية الوصفية (المتوسطات والانحرافات المعيارية) لكل من الاختبار القبلي والاختبار البعدي لمستوى مفردات اللغة الإنجليزية لدى طلبة كل من المجموعة التجريبية والمجموعة الضابطة. وتم أيضاً استخدام أساليب التحليل (ANOVA) وذلك للمقارنة بين المجموعة الضابطة والمجموعة التجريبية ومتغير الجنس. أشارت نتائج الدراسة وجود فروقات دالة إحصائياً بين المجموعة الضابطة والمجموعة التجريبية في الاختبار البعدي لصالح المجموعة التجريبية وعدم وجود فرق ذو دلالة إحصائية في تحصيل الطلبة يعزى الى النوع الاجتماعي. خلص الباحث لمجموعة من التوصيات لتعزيز أثر استخدام البطاقات التعليمية على تحصيل الطلبة في مفردات اللغة الإنجليزية مثل إجراء دراسات أكثر على عينات أخرى ولفترات زمنية أطول.

Chapter One
Theoretical Background

1.1 Introduction

Teaching vocabulary is considered as one of the most significant issues in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL hereafter) and English as a Second Language (ESL hereafter). It has been gaining more concern from both learners and educators compared to the past. In his mythoclastic book, Folse (2004), refutes the eight prevailing misconceptions about vocabulary teaching and learning. One of those myths (Myth 8) he states that "Teachers, textbooks, and curricula cover second language (SL hereafter) vocabulary adequately," and he comments as follows (pp. 162-163):

The truth is that vocabulary is lacking in the overall curriculum. … Furthermore, except for the few vocabulary textbooks that explicitly cover vocabulary, most ESL textbooks do not systematically deal with vocabulary.

Similarly, Zimmerman (1997, p.17) states that,

Although the lexicon is arguably central to language acquisition and use, vocabulary instruction has not been a priority in second language acquisition research and methodology.

Nation (2001) argued that vocabulary is central to language and is of great significance to language learners. Words are the building blocks of a language since they label objects, actions, ideas without which people cannot convey the intended meaning. The prominent role of vocabulary knowledge in second or foreign language learning has been recently recognized by theorists and researchers in the field. Accordingly, numerous types of approaches, techniques, exercises and practice have been introduced into the field to teach vocabulary (Hatch & Brown, 1995). It has been suggested that teaching vocabulary should not only consist of teaching specific words but also aim at equipping learners with strategies necessary to expand their vocabulary knowledge (Morin & Goebel, 2001).

Teaching English vocabulary is an important area worthy of effort and investigation. Recently methodologists and linguists emphasize and recommend teaching vocabulary because of its importance in language teaching. Vocabulary is needed for expressing meaning and in using the receptive (listening and reading) and the productive (speaking and writing) skills. "if the skeleton of language is made up by language structure, then the vital organs and the flesh are provided by vocabulary " (Harmer, 1991, p.53).

Vocabulary is not a syllabus, i.e., a list of words that teachers prepare for their learners to memorize and learn by heart. Memorizing may be good and useful as a

temporary technique for tests, but not for learning a foreign language. Language students need to learn vocabulary of the target language in another way. If we are really to teach students what words mean and how they are used, we need to show them being used together contextually. Words do not just exist on their own; they live together and they depend upon each other. Therefore, teaching vocabulary correctly is a very important element in language learning. Correct vocabulary instruction involves vocabulary selection, word knowledge and techniques.

In the past, teachers used to select and present vocabulary from concrete to abstract. Words like ‘door’, ‘window’, ‘desk’, etc., which are concrete, used to be taught at beginning levels. However, words like ‘honesty’, ‘beauty’ etc., which are abstract words, used to be taught at advanced levels because they are not “physically represented” in the learning/teaching environment and are very difficult to explain (Harmer, 1991).

One easy and very convenient method for improving your vocabulary is with the use of Vocabulary Flashcards. Flashcards have been around for many years. They have been tried and tested and proven to be extremely beneficial.

The best part about using Flashcards to enhance students’ vocabulary is that it doesn’t matter their background. Flashcards are beneficial to all learners. Whether they are a non-English speakers university student or a mature-aged learners Flashcards can help. The principle behind the Flashcard learning aid is adaptable to all learners.

One method to improve students’ vocabulary is to carry empty vocabulary Flashcards around with them. Every time they come across an unknown or interesting word, they write it down. Once they get home or have access to a dictionary, they have to write up their Flashcards. students often have small amounts of free time throughout their day (such as when waiting for buses or lectures). These wasted moments are perfect opportunities to get the Flashcards out and start learning.

In essence, to practice students’ vocabulary with a Flashcard, they should: look at the word; provide a definition without the card; put it in a sentence; and state antonyms and synonyms. Once they have done this, they have to turn the card over and see whether they were correct.

As students go through the Flashcards, put correctly identified words in a new stack and wrong words back in the old stack. The new stack is the pile they have almost mastered. Over time, they go through this stack again. Each time they get a word right put a red mark of the Flashcard. If they end up with three marks, then place it in a pile of words they know (Cornelsen, 2006).

Growing students’ vocabulary gives them the freedom to fully participate in activities that would not normally be available. Opportunities abound when a

person has a rich vocabulary. Essentially, by developing the students' vocabulary, they are developing their capacity for learning (Manzo, Manzo, & Thomas. 2006).Whether it is at work, study, or social events, improving the students' vocabulary can give them the confidence they need to succeed. The good news is that there are many effective techniques on how to improve vocabulary.

Flashcards are very versatile teaching resource especially for ESL and language teaching. They can be used virtually in any lesson and at every level of teaching ESL. In fact flashcards are indispensable for the beginner and elementary level as at these stages the learners are engaged in developing their vocabulary. Flashcards are useful for teaching vocabulary in a number of ways: matching words to pictures, drilling vocabulary, concentration games, singular and plurals, nouns, verbs, adjectives etc.

Flashcards are also very useful for sequencing activities, pair work and group work. Flashcards are very useful for teaching grammar structures as well.

1.2 Statement of the problem

For any beginning English learner, especially for a young learner, vocabulary and grammar are two essential units that require them to master at an early stage. It was once claimed that "experienced teachers of English as a Second Language know very well how important vocabulary is. They know their students must learn thousands of words that speakers and writers of English use" (Allen, 1983, p.13). Also, linguist Wilkins, one of the leaders in language learning and teaching, as quoted in How to teach vocabulary (Thornbury, 2002), indicated that "without grammar, very little could be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed".

For many years, however, teaching vocabulary was considered as one of the most important issues in teaching and communicative functions (Meara, 1980). The reasons were: firstly, too many words in one sentence were believed to break its grammar structure and spoil children in learning systematic grammar; secondly, it was thought that vocabulary could be learnt through experience only and therefore, there was little need for the teachers to focus much on teaching their students vocabulary; and thirdly, they put the emphasis of teaching grammar on priority to vocabulary in the classroom (Allen, 1983). The core concept of how important teaching vocabulary in class was not recognized until late 1970s and 1980s when people realized the necessity of vocabulary in reading comprehension (Allen, 1983)

In Saudi Arabia, the issue of teaching and learning vocabulary within context is considered a problem because students at all schools in the kingdom are not provided with chances to deal with native speakers of English and to stay in

frequent contact with native teachers from English- speaking countries, to absorb new vocabulary in practical and efficient manner and to acquire new language in a most natural way. However, in most cases teachers find it hard to present and practice new language with young learners, in fact, it is one of the most difficult-to-handle targets at these schools. Hence, the researcher was driven to investigate into current situation of using various techniques in teaching vocabulary to young learners in Saudi Arabia.

1.3 Significance of the study

Many researchers are interested in using pictures and symbols for teaching vocabulary. Therefore, many studies were conducted on using flashcards for teaching English vocabulary. However, to the researchers' best knowledge; few studies were conducted on using flashcards in teaching English vocabulary in Saudi Arabia.

The current study focuses on the effect of using flashcards for teaching vocabulary on students' achievement in English language vocabulary; also it is expected to help with integrating new ways of instruction in English language to meet the new century demand, and to find solutions to some of the problems of teaching in Saudi Arabia Schools.

This was motivated for several factors: Firstly, the study may motivate other researchers to reconsider the using of different teaching strategies used nowadays. And Secondly, the using of flashcards instruction might be a source of excitement and motivation to Saudi Arabia students in their English courses.

1.4 Purpose of the study

Based on the significance attributed to vocabulary learning strategies in the process of vocabulary learning and enhancement, the present study aims at investigating the effect of using flashcards in teaching vocabulary to sixth grade male and female Saudi students in Tabouk. As a result this study also aims at theoretically equipping teachers at Saudi Arabia schools with panoramic picture of teaching vocabulary to EFL students using flashcards.

1.5 Hypotheses of the Study

1- There are statistically significant differences in the sixth grade students' achievement in English vocabulary due to strategy of teaching.

2- There are statistically significant differences in the sixth grade students' achievement in English vocabulary due to gender.

1.6 Questions of the Study

1- Are there any statistically significant differences (α≤0. 05) in the Sixth grade students' achievement in English vocabulary due to the strategy of teaching they are exposed to (using flashcards and conventional way)?
2- Are there any statistically significant differences (α≤0. 05) in the Sixth grade students' achievement in English vocabulary due to gender (male or female)?

1.7 Operational definition of terms

The following terms had the associated meaning in this study:

Vocabulary Flashcards

Vocabulary flashcards are great tools for teaching. They can be fun, colorful cards, and creative ways to aid in memory and retention of vocabulary words. You can use them as a simple one-on-one quiz session, or an exciting game for a big group.

In this study flashcards are pieces of paper with pictures of certain vocabulary items that were designed and used to teach vocabulary by the researcher.

Sixth Grade Students

They are male and female students whose ages range between 11-12 years, and are studying in Saudi Arabia.

In this study they are male and female students studying at Ibn Zaidoon School for boys and Al Sabea Wa Athalathon School for girls in Tabouk in Saudi Arabia and whose age range between 11 and 12 and for first time study English language.

English Language Vocabulary

The sum of word used by, understood by, or at the command of a particular person or group.

In this study they are the list of vocabularies included in the sixth grade textbook in Saudi Arabia.

Conventional method of teaching

Conventional teaching is concerned with the teacher being the controller of the learning environment (teacher-centered teaching)

In this study it is the method that is used in the classroom where the teacher follows the suggested procedures of the teachers' guide in the teaching process.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to the male sixth grade students at Ibn Zaidoon School, and female sixth grade students at Al Sabea Wa Athalathon school in Tabouk City in Saudi Arabia, and to any other similar samples. During the first semester of the Academic year 2011/2012 and to the number of the designed flashcards.

Chapter Two
Review of Literature

2.1 Theoretical Framework:

Vocabulary

Vocabulary building is really important in any language learning. Vocabulary also becomes the most important aspect in acquiring a language and mastering the second language.

Vocabulary becomes a major problem in learning English, teachers of Elementary School emphasizes on this matter earlier. In teaching vocabulary, generally the teacher teaches new words taken from reading text. It means that she integrates vocabulary with reading. This integration will lead to integrative lesson plan.

As (Goebel and Morin, 2001: 16) stated that, "teaching vocabulary should not only consist of teaching specific words but also aim at equipping students with strategies necessary to expand their vocabulary knowledge". Learning more and more vocabulary items does not necessarily increase a person's fluency. By definition, the extra items are less and less useful. Despite this obvious fact, teachers and even more and more students, feel that increasing their vocabulary will increase their fluency-either in speech or in writing. This is very far from the truth. Knowing a vocabulary item is not a simple process – it means much more than simply memorizing the word.

Teaching vocabulary is clearly more than just presenting new words, because vocabulary plays an essential role in learning language. (Schmitt, N, 2000: 19) said that. "One of the key elements in learning a foreign language is mastering the second language's vocabulary". Vocabulary teaching can help the students to learn the meaning of the words, understand the connection between form and the meaning and how to use it.

Students always deal with vocabulary in learning English because it appears in any language skills. Having enough vocabulary can make them able to listen, speak, read, and write. Therefore, vocabulary should be developing in order to achieve their language skills. Meanwhile vocabulary cannot be taught separately but it should be taught in context, which may not relate to the students environment. As stated by McMillan, which quoted by (Nation, 2001: 85) that, "we should also give precedence to vocabulary which is related to environment and experience of pupil whether or not it is found in our textbook or high on a word". It is clear that teaching vocabulary in context and creating a good environment to help the student's remember the words easily can improve student's vocabulary.

2.2 Teaching Vocabulary through Flashcards

Teacher as facilitator should accommodate their students by finding out some interesting ways of teaching, in order to make the students interested to the lesson, teachers can use teaching aids for teaching grammar since most children like pictures there is an advantages to teach them using visual aids, so that they are interested to the lesson. Moreover, they are eager to learn more about English grammar. Some of the examples of teaching aid's advantages are: to attract student's attention to the lesson, visual aids are easy to prepared (so that everyone can make flashcards by drawing any illustration according to the purpose teaching), visual aids cards are easy to be carried around as they are only a stack of cards, and the last one visual aids are easy to be used (as they are only transferred of flash from back to front).

2.3 Importance of vocabulary and vocabulary learning in EFL context

In the context of learning English as a Foreign Language, the vital role of vocabulary is inevitable. This has been claimed by many linguists and experts in the field. (Thornbury, 2002, p.13) clearly stated that "without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed". Coincidentally, Dellar.and Hocking. Innovations in the same summary from (Thornbury, 2002, p.13) indicated that "progress made from learning grammar most of the time would be much less than that from learning vocabulary". To be short and concise, when comparing the importance of grammar and vocabulary, both mentioned statement above show that most of learner's improvement was created when learner himself/herself learned more words and expressions. It was also emphasized when it came to communicate that "you can say very little with grammar, but you can say almost anything with words".

In Teaching Practice (Gower, Phillips, & Walters, S.,(2005, p.142) and co-writers came straight to point that "vocabulary is important to students – it is more important than grammar for communication purposes, particularly in the early stages when students are motivated to learn the basic words they need to get by in the language". This reflects the truth that even when students have already "done" all the rules in grammar, the lexical system is still "open" for them to gain more vocabulary. Furthermore, this conclusion deducted the communicative purpose in learning vocabulary as an ultimate goal for learning a new language – learning vocabulary is better for communicating than grammar.

This does not necessarily means lowering the importance of learning grammar. This merely shows that learning vocabulary plays an equally vital role as

grammar, which was once considered to be a superior field in learning a new language (Meara, 1980)

The importance or the emphasis on learning vocabulary is further stressed on several course books such as: Cutting Edge Intermediate or New Headway English Course. On the back of each course book, readers can be briefly provided with information about focused points of the book, which includes: Strong emphasis on vocabulary, with a particular focus on high frequency, useful words and phrases." (Cutting Edge Intermediate).

Or: Well-defined vocabulary syllabus plus dictionary training and pronunciation practice, including the use of phonetics." (New Headway English Course).

It is true that students must learn grammar which can be considered as a fixed "systematic rule" (Thornbury, 2002). In most language courses, the requirement of learning grammar and vocabulary is often made into syllabuses, which helps learners get various approaches to the language. As what Thornbury stated in How to teach vocabulary, grammar is a collection of rules while vocabulary is a collection of items and one rule can generate a great many sentences, which to some extents implicates that "vocabulary learning never stops, even long after grammar system is firmly in place, new words are being coined daily and old words is assuming new meanings" or in other words, the grammar learning could be mastered at some level whereas mastering learning vocabulary seems to take more time than that.

The importance of learning vocabulary is also mentioned in many other researches. (Gu, 2003) in his research paper on Vocabulary learning in a Second language claimed that vocabulary acquisition is an essential achievement that one needs to fulfill his/her study in second language (Gu, 2003). He also emphasized the need for motivating students. Self – strategies are needed, thus, they are motivated by how teachers can produce a motivating lessons to raise students' interest.

Vocabulary learning strategies are one part of language learning strategies which in turn are part of general learning strategies (Nation, 2001). Language learning strategies encourage greater overall self-direction for learners. Self-directed learners are independent learners who are capable of assuming responsibility for their own learning and gradually gaining confidence, involvement and proficiency (Oxford, 1990). So is the case with vocabulary learning strategies? Thus, students need training in vocabulary learning strategies they need most. Research has shown that many learners do use more strategies to learn vocabulary especially when compared to such integrated tasks such as listening and speaking. But they are mostly inclined to use basic vocabulary

learning strategies (Schmitt, 1997). This in turn makes strategy instruction an essential part of any foreign or second language program.

Researchers have worked on one or certain technique in teaching vocabulary. (Nation, 2000) whose special interests are language teaching methodology and vocabulary, for example, claimed that the major problem with vocabulary teaching was that only a few words and a small part of what was required to know a word could be dealt with at any one time (p. 3). He put a considerable stress on the issue of complexity which he pointed out "the more complex the information is, the more likely the learners are to misinterpret it." Concerning the identical subject matter of techniques in teaching vocabulary, (Akbari. 2008) held his interest in experimenting teaching "vocabulary items through contextualization and pictures." By presenting pictures (flashcards), model sentences, antonym and synonyms into classroom, the experiment was conducted among three groups. After a thorough procedure of testing and analyzing each group, conclusion was eventually coined to prove the effectiveness of using pictures in teaching. Notably that this experimental research was piloted on elementary groups, which in the researcher's opinion, mainly concrete lexical items were presented and taught as a whole.

2.4 Related Literature

Taka (1997) "**World game bingo and adult literacy students. Sight word acquisition and reading comprehension**" obtained similar results, using flashcards as part of a bingo game, with a small group of adult literacy learners in Texas. The bingo card had 25 squares, with each square containing one of the 25 words to be learned. The tutor shuffled the pile of 25 flashcards and started reading them out. Students had to find the called-out word on the bingo card, and place a button in the right square on the card. When a student completed a row, column, or diagonal of five words, they called out "bingo." After a quick check by the group to verify that the student had indeed located the correct words, a new game began. The adults improved in word reading accuracy as a result of the bingo game training, and the training had a positive effect on their reading comprehension when they read stories that contained the trained words. It's surprising how this simple technique of using flashcards can make a difficult-to-read story more accessible to poor readers. (Taka, 1997) reported that the adult learners really enjoyed the bingo games. They thought of songs or phrases to help them get the meaning of each trained word (e.g., "I found my thrill on blueberry hill," "I just called to say I love you," for the words found and called)
.

Tan and Nicholson (1997) **"Flashcards revisited: Training poor readers to read words faster improves their comprehension of text"** found no difference between either type of flashcard in terms of effectiveness. It's a matter of personal preference. Present each of the 20 flashcards, one by one. See if the children can recognise them. If not, pronounce the words for the children. Also check to see if the meaning of each word is understood. If you are using single-word flashcards, write a phrase on the back of the card (e.g., "raspberry jam"). If the children do not know what the word means, turn around the card and show the phrase. Ask the children to use the word in a sentence as well. Be sure that they have a good understanding of the word.

Rachel (2001) **"The effects of using** flashcards **with reading racetrack to teach letter sounds, sight words, and math facts to elementary students with learning disabilities"** conducted a study to measure the effects of reading racetrack and flashcards when teaching phonics, sight words, and addition facts. The participants for the sight word and phonics portion of this study were two seven-year-old boys in the second grade. Both participants were diagnosed with a learning disability. The third participant was diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder by his pediatrician and with a learning disability and traumatic brain injury by his school's multi-disciplinary team.. The dependent measures were corrects and errors when reading from a first grade level sight word list. Math facts were selected based on a 100 add fact test for the third participant. The study demonstrated that racetracks paired with the flashcard intervention improved the students' number of corrects for each subject-matter area (phonics, sight words, and math facts). However, the results show that some students had more success with it than others. These outcomes clearly warrant further research.

Lynell,B (2004) "**Visual Presentations That Prompt, Flash &Transform**" conducted ways to conduct classroom sessions using projectors. Flashcards remain a stable way to help students retain information. Instead of spending hours laminating paper flash cards, create a digital template. A projector is used to show the flash slides for specific areas of study. Teach students word processing commands like cut, paste and move in a fun way by projecting scrambled jokes. Use the move command in the word processor to show students how the word processor tools work. By projecting this process, a large class can see how simple the transfer of information can be. This kind of text sequencing can be used to reorder not just jokes, but also event timelines, size of numbers or objects, and other selections. Have a full-screen photographic image projected in your classroom when students walk into class. Then have them write their interpretations of the projected image. By using these readily you can create

compelling curriculum and reach those learners who have failed to learn from text-only media. Images are more than illustration. They are the heart of comprehension and the fastest route to academic success.

Anthony (2005) "**Title:The Design, Use and Evaluation of Hypermedia Flashcards as a Teaching Tool**" conducted a study in which he focused on the design, use and evaluation of hypermedia flashcards as a teaching tool. Despite the proliferation of textbook-style study guides, many of the students still prefer flashcards as a way to keep up with important terminology and concepts. To give these students study tools that grab their attention, the authors made hypermedia flashcards (h-cards). Each h-card is a web page that shows the front of a flashcard, and reveals the back when the user moves the pointer to the appropriate area. They can be examined in a particular order or at random. In CD-ROM format they are fairly portable. In online format, it is easy to add new h-cards to an existing set, and errors can be corrected. H-cards also have features lacking in traditional flashcards. Every student has access to the same set of cards, and individual h-cards don't get lost, torn or coffee stained. Test scores, survey results and other student feedback show that h-cards are an effective study tool and fun to use, whether alone or as part of an active learning experience. Designing h-cards is surprisingly easy. These can be designed without any formal training in web page design or in the use of JavaScript. A little trial-and-error provided all, the authors needed to make a simple set of h-cards.

Al-Salmi (2008) "**Teaching Vocabulary Using Shared Reading and Flashcards. Some Considerations. Online Resources: Digests**" explored an alternative way of teaching vocabulary – shared reading, she worked with two Grade 1 classes (6-7 years old) in Basic Education cycle one and she tried to answer the following questions:

1- What vocabulary knowledge is learnt when using FCs and big books?
2- What are the benefits of doing shared reading?
3- Can we identify these benefits in Omani learners?

The results of this study showed that using big books and shared reading parallel with flashcards can help children learn vocabulary more effectively. The researchers' experience of using big books and flashcards suggests that learners find them motivating and enjoyable, and this is a key reason why learning through big books and flashcards is really memorable

Kornell (2009) "**Optimizing Learning Using Flashcards: Spacing Is More Effective than Cramming**" investigated the spacing effect in the realistic context of flashcard use in elementary and middle school students in three Virginia school districts. The sample consisted of 130 students. Learners often divide flashcards into relatively small stacks, but compared to a large stack, small stacks decrease

the spacing between study trials. In three experiments, participants used a web-based study programme to learn GRE-type word pairs. Studying one large stack of flashcards (i.e. spacing) was more effective than studying four smaller stacks of flashcards separately (i.e. massing). Spacing was also more effective than cramming-that is, massing study on the last day before the test. Across experiments, spacing was more effective than massing for 90% of the participants, yet after the first study session, 72% of the participants believed that massing had been more effective than spacing.

In conclusion, having reviewed the above studies, we find that many researchers assert the importance of using flash cards for teaching English vocabulary. It is clear from the studies that using flash cards is more beneficial and helpful than teaching vocabulary using traditional methods e.g., (Anthony 2005); (LynellB 2004); (Rachel 2001); (Tan and Nicholson; 1997); (Taka 1997); and (Al Salmi 2008). However, only few of them report that there are no significant differences between using flash cards for teaching vocabulary and the traditional method. This study is different from the previously mentioned studies. It focused on using flash cards by Saudi Arabian teachers and to the researchers' best knowledge; a few studies were conducted on Saudi Arabia.

Chapter Three
Design and Methodology

In this chapter the researcher stated the procedures that he used to conduct the study. Researcher described the study population, sample, variables, instrument, procedures and the statistical analyses that were used in the study.

3.1 Population of the study

The population of the study consisted of all sixth grade students in Tabouk educational directorate enrolling in the second semester 2010/2011whom they form . 1420 male students and 1431 female students.

3.2 Sample of the study

The sample of the study comprised of 149 sixth grade male and female students in Ibn Zaidoon School and Al Sabea Wa Athalathon school and was distributed into two sections in each school, which were selected randomly. One control group and one experimental group in each school. At Ibn Zaidoon school for boys the experimental section consisted of 38 students while the control consisted of 35 students. At Alsabea Wa Athalathon school for girls the experimental group consisted of 37 students while the control group consisted of 39 students. Table (1) shows the distribution of the sample of the study.

Table (1)
Distribution of the sample of the study

school	experimental group	control	total
Ibn zaidoon for boys	38	35	73
Alsabea Wathlathoon for girls	37	39	76
total	75	74	149

3.3 Instrument of the study

The researcher used two strategies for teaching English vocabulary: A strategy by using flashcards and the conventional strategy. Then the researcher designed a test based on the instructional material of the sixth grade English textbook to collect the data. Validity and reliability were ensured . Both groups; the experimental group as well the control group in the boys' school were taught by the researcher while the experimental and control groups in the girls' school were taught by the researchers' niece. The participants in both groups took a pre-test to determine their actual level before starting the experiment, and the same test was

administered as a post-test at the end of the experiment to assess participants' achievement. The time interval between the pre-test and the post-test was (8) weeks; a period long enough to minimize the effect of the pre-test on the results and conclusions of the experiment. The achievement test consisted of 29 vocabulary items. (Appendix I)

3.4 Reliability of the instrument

To ensure the test reliability, the researcher followed test/retest technique. The researcher applied the achievement test to a pilot sample of (20) student who were excluded from the study with a two-week period between the test and the re-test. The reliability of the test was calculated using correlation coefficient and found to be 0.87. The researcher considered this value acceptable for the purposes of the study.

3.5 Validity of the instrument

The researcher designed a vocabulary test taking into consideration the instructional material. The researcher validated the instrument by submitting it to a jury of two EFL professors teaching at Tabouk University, three supervisors of English language working at the Directorate of Education of Tabouk, and two sixth grade teachers of English (Appendix III). The researcher followed the recommendations of the referees and made amendments accordingly. When producing the final version of the test, the remarks and recommendations of these English experts were taken into account. The test was consisted of 39 items and after it was validated it became 30 items. (Appendix I).

3.6 Instructional material

The instructional material was the sixth grade English textbook which includes more than 100 new words, but the researcher covered at least 70 words during the application period.

3.7 Procedures of the study

The participants of the study were divided into two groups, experimental and control: The participants of the experimental group were taught by using flashcards for (8) weeks, While the participants of the control group were taught by using the conventional way for the same period at both the boys' and girls' schools.

The procedures of conducting this study were as follows:

1- Obtain the approval from Mutah University and the Educational Directorate of Tabouk.

2- Select the schools purposefully. The researcher teaches at the boys' school and his niece teaches at the girls' school.
3- -Select the vocabularies and design the appropriate flashcards.
4- -Ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument of the study.
5- -The researcher conducted the study with the help of his niece, the researcher conducted the study himself at the boys school and his niece conducted the study at the same time in the girls school.
6- -Apply the instrument of the study.
7- Use SPSS to analyze the collected data.

There are four groups of students in the two schools: two experimental groups and two control groups. All groups received 8 weeks of instruction of English vocabulary. Students in the experimental groups were taught using flashcards on the English content. While Students in the control group were instructed using the conventional way. The conventional instruction in this study were exercises and drills given by the teacher, use of textbooks and other materials, and a clear explanation of the meaning of some words to students. They focused on memorization. The teacher reviewed some of the textbook topics. They spent their class time using hands-on and manipulative activities.

3.8 Statistical Analyses

The descriptive methods (means and standard deviation) were used for pre and post tests for English vocabulary test for both the experimental and control groups.

A Two-way ANOVA was used to show whether the group and gender variable had any statistical significance

Chapter Four
Findings ,discussion and recommendations

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of using flashcards on sixth grade male and female students' achievement in English vocabulary in Ibn Zaidoon School for boys and Al Sabea Wa Athalathon school for girls. The researcher followed the equivalent pre /post test two group designs. Therefore, the means, standard deviations and Two-Way ANOVA analysis of variance were used to analyze data. The results will be displayed based on the questions of the study. Before applying the experiment of the study a pre-test was administered on both the experimental and control groups. Then the means and standard deviations were calculated as shown in table (2). Then two-way ANOVA was calculated of the two groups to show the equivalence prior to conducting the experiment table (3)

Table (2)
Means and standard deviations of the achievement of the groups on the pretest.

GROUP	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Experimental	Male	69.37	11.95	38
	Female	69.30	9.76	37
	Total	69.33	10.85	75
Control	Male	70.40	10.63	35
	Female	68.51	11.08	39
	Total	69.41	10.84	74
Total	Male	69.86	11.27	73
	Female	68.89	10.40	76
	Total	69.37	10.81	149

Table (2) shows that the mean for the experimental group is 69.33 while for the control group is 69.41. It also shows that the mean for male students was 69.86. while for female students it was 68.89.

To determine if the two groups are equivalent in their English vocabulary. A two-way ANOVA of the pre-test was conducted as shown in table (3).

Table (3)

Two- Way ANOVA results of the experimental and the control groups on the pretest.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
GROUP	.568	1	.568	.005	.945
GENDER	35.656	1	35.656	.300	.585
GROUP * GENDER	30.664	1	30.664	.258	.612
Error	17226.715	145	118.805		
Corrected Total	17292.698	148			

Table (3) shows that there were no statistical significant difference between the achievement of the two groups on the pre-test at $\alpha \leq 0.05$ because the significance level was .945 which is not significant $\alpha \leq 0.\ 05$. This shows that two groups were equivalent Before conducting the study.

In addition table (3) shows that male and female students were also equivalent before conducting the study since the significance level was .585 which is not significant at $\alpha \leq 0.\ 05$.

To answer the research questions which are:

1- Are there any statistically significant differences ($\alpha \leq 0.\ 05$) in the Sixth grade students' achievement in English vocabulary due to the strategy of teaching they are exposed to (using flashcards and conventional way)?

2- Are there any statistically significant differences ($\alpha \leq 0.\ 05$) in the Sixth grade students' achievement in English vocabulary due to gender (male or female) ?

The researcher calculated the means and standard deviations of the achievement of the experimental and control group on the post-test (table 4). Then the researcher calculated a Two Way- ANOVA to show the statistical significance if any table (5).

Table (4)

Means and standard deviations of the achievement of male and female groups on the posttest.

GROUP	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Experimental	Male	82.05	8.33	38
	Female	81.95	8.89	37
	Total	82.00	8.56	75
Control	Male	78.74	9.73	35
	Female	77.77	11.37	39
	Total	78.23	10.57	74
Total	Male	80.47	9.12	73
	Female	79.80	10.38	76
	Total	80.13	9.76	149

Table (4) shows that the experimental group on the post-test had a mean score of 82.00 and the control group had a mean score of 78.23. It also shows that the male students had a mean score of 80.47 while the female students had a mean score of 79.80. to show whether or not these numbers are significant a Two Way analysis of variances was calculated as shown in table (5).

Table (5)

A Two-way Analysis of Variance of the Achievement of the control and the Experimental Groups on the post test

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
GROUP	521.104	1	521.104	5.577	.020
SEX	10.851	1	10.851	.116	.734
GROUP * SEX	6.988	1	6.988	.075	.785
Error	13547.395	145	93.430		
Corrected Total	14094.577	148			

Table (5) above indicated that there was a significant statistical difference between the experimental and control groups at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in 6^{th} grade students' achievement on the post-test in vocabulary in favor of the experimental group. For the level of significant on two way ANOVA was .020 which is significant and it is in favor of the experimental group since the mean score was 82.00 in table (4).

As for the second research questions table (5) shows that there was no significant statistical difference between male and female students . For the significant level was .734 which is not significant at ≤0. 05 and therefore is not significant.

To sum up, the researcher believes that the difference in the achievement of the sixth grade students was attributed to the using of flashcards for teaching English vocabulary. The experimental group participants managed to significantly improve English vocabulary in a period of 8 weeks. The improvement achieved by the control group subjects, however, was not statistically significant. By comparing the results achieved by the two groups, the researcher reached the conclusion that the improvement achieved by the experimental group may have been attributed to the way he rendered instruction; using flashcards.

As a result of this experiment, the researcher concluded that students were more engaged in learning when they were given a chance to use flashcards to learn new vocabulary.

4.1 Conclusion

Teaching vocabulary by using flashcards was one of the techniques that made a real impact of visual learner. Visual learner could improve the student's

intelligence in acquiring vocabularies. Flashcards could give a new paradigm for the students in learning by fun and enjoyment, because their visual learner and intelligence sense had existed. It helped the students to easily understand, recalling and saying. The learner's vocabulary size was very important because it was related to proficiency, such as the students were able to understand, read, writer and perform on other language components.

4.2 Discussion

Folse (2004) stated that vocabulary acquisition through reading: "Guessing words from context and using flashcards is an excellent strategy."

He states that "people can generally communicate their meaning with less than perfect grammar whereas incorrect use of vocabulary can substantially impede communication" (p. 26) and suggest that teachers make vocabulary teaching one of their primary objectives.

Nation (2001) likewise mentions that "there are principles that some teachers and course designers follow that go against research findings" and mentions several of them in relation to vocabulary.

"All vocabulary learning should occur in context," and "Vocabulary learning does not benefit from being planned, but can be determined by the occurrence of words in texts, tasks and themes." (p. 384)

Moreover, Laufer (1997) indicates that, "no text comprehension is possible, either in one's native language or in a foreign language, without understanding the text's vocabulary" (p. 20) because good vocabulary knowledge is essential for reading comprehension and using flashcards help in learning new vocabulary. She verbalizes this fact as follows: "Reading well is a psycholinguistic guessing game. But words are the toys you need to play it right." (p. 32)

Actually, my study was unique in that it was the first that was conducted in Saudi Arabia about using flash cards for teaching English vocabulary, it may enhance teachers to benefit from its results and focus on using flash cards, EFL students face difficulties in learning English vocabulary and it is the time to overcome these difficulties. My study will have a great role in doing so.

4.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the researcher suggested the following recommendations

1- Perform the experiment over a longer period of time so that students have adequate time to shake off current habits of traditional strategies for teaching English vocabulary and become more familiar with the using of flashcards.
2- Conducting other studies to investigate the effect of using flashcards for teaching English vocabulary on other samples of students.

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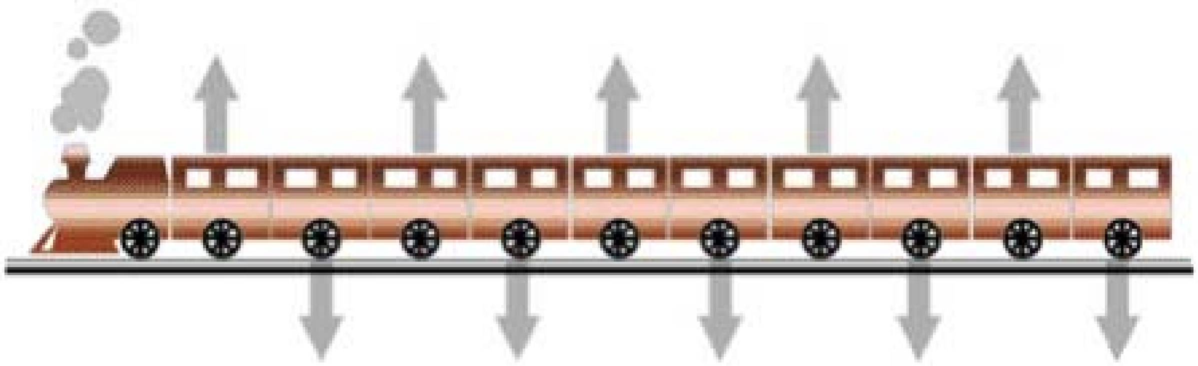
Appendix (I)
The instrument of the study

1) Complete:

(third , fourth , second , first,sixth,.tenth,eighth,seventh,fifth.ninth)

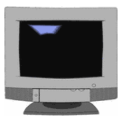
………. ……… ……….. ………. …….

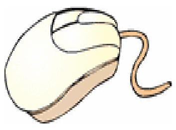


………….. ……….. ……….. ………. ……….

2) Write the suitable word under each picture:

mouse – grandmother – monitor – uncle - car





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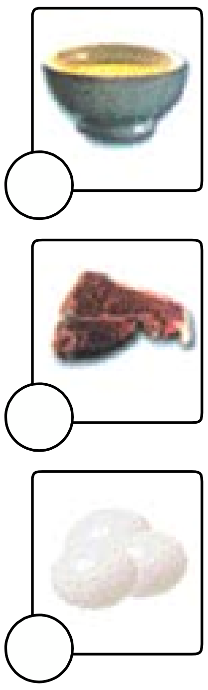
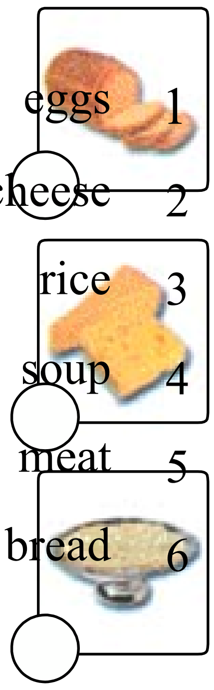
3) Match



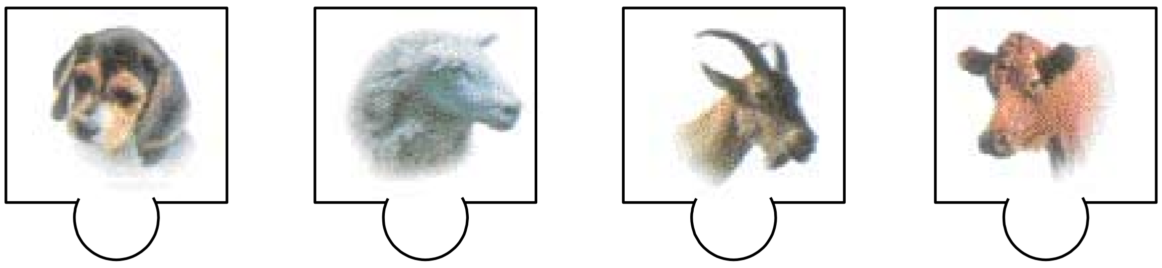
eggs 1
cheese 2
rice 3
soup 4
meat 5
bread 6



1

4) Match:

4- goat   3- dog   2-cow   sheep 1-

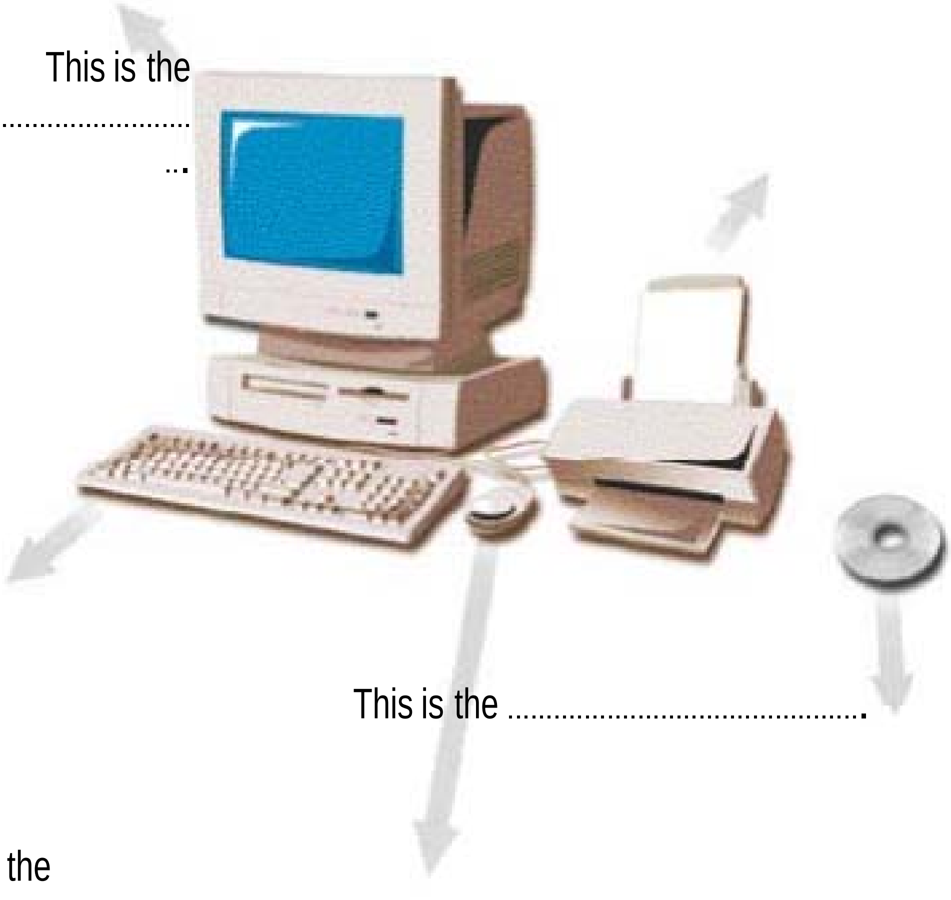


word:) Write the suitable5

monitor – keyboard – mouse – printer – CD

This is the ....

This is the ....



This is the ....

This is the ....

This is the ....

Appendix (II)

The jury

The Jury

1.	Mohamed Jalal.	EFL Professor	Tabouk university
2.	Sameer Mahmod.	EFL Associated Professor	Tabouk university
3.	Hamdan Al-Ali.	Supervisor	Tabouk educational directorate
4.	Ali Ibrahim.	Supervisor	Tabouk educational directorate
5.	Mansour Abdulatif	Teacher	Tabouk educational directorate
6.	Abdullah Almazayd.	Teacher	Tabouk educational directorate
7.	Hameed Saleem.	Teacher	Tabouk educational directorate